



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0355PA-1 for Bradford Area School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Bradford Schools set forth a plan in 2007 to help in differentiated learning. This plan included personal learning plans, blended learning environments, multiple pathways of personal learning, career pathways, STEM labs, and school based mental and behavioral health programs. The proposal admits to inadequate results from their learning system and the aforementioned plan is confusing and non-coherent to the goals of this section. Thus, the reform vision is not clear or a credible approach of accelerating student achievement. The four core educational assurance areas are not addressed either.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A) There is little evidence of systemic change or implementation described in this section.</p> <p>(B) Two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school are names and demographics are provided.</p> <p>(C) Total number of students and percentages of poverty are provided. It is unclear how poverty is defined from this data. It can be surmised that the proposal is using the same definition as the call for defining low-income. There is no evidence regarding high need students and participating educators. Raw data suggests below average percentages of low SES student involvement in reform.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	1
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application alludes to a plan but there is no clear articulation of what will be done. There is a description of six projects that are designed to impact academic and career achievement. The applicant states the reform proposal is comprehensive but the description is limited to a few sentences about each of the six projects. This section calls for a high quality plan describing now the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated but the lack of a high quality plan limits the understanding of the proposed work.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This is a great section. The data suggests growth in all areas and the 'safe harbor' goal is clearly defined. All claims are supported by data in this section. In particular, the provided data tables illustrate the claims made in the text.</p> <p>(a) Performance on summative assessments is clearly articulated and the actual assessments that will be used are described. Complete descriptions of what defines ATP in this district are clear and the goals articulated to educators, parents and students are well thought out.</p> <p>(b) The data table provided in this section is a good visual for how demographics have performed and are estimated to perform through post grant funding.</p> <p>(c) A data table is provided for only economically disadvantaged students but there is no supporting text to explain the table and the plan to increase graduation rates.</p> <p>(d) Again, a data table shows college enrollment rate and projected increases over the course of this grant. Inadequate text is provided to support the projected increases and how the district plan will in fact result in those increases.</p>		

A blank data table is provided with no supporting text except a description of inconsistent data based on students' response rate.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	12
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>From the data reported, Bradford has demonstrated a clear trajectory of improvement over the last several years.</p> <p>(a) The district has made AYP seven years and outperformed the rest of PA in a norm reference test. The graduation rate has steadily increased until this year where they saw a slight drop.</p> <p>(b) It appears, however, that this district has been on a good track for the four-year evaluation period but has shown improvement over the last 11 years. This includes improvement in their lowest performing schools.</p> <p>Articulation of how performance data was used to inform practice and made available to students, educators, etc. is not clear.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>If one files a PA Right To Know Act, then they can have access but the transparency isn't as clear as one might want or hope. The district is mandated to respond within five days. This lack of transparency seems problematic. Budgets are presented annually at school board meetings but it is not clear if salaries are included in this presentation.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan sounds wonderful but it was not articulated clearly. Little supporting evidence was provided. The full cyber program will become blended during regular school hours and with alternative after school hours to meet the needs of various student populations. It is not clear as to how the blended model will be affected by PDE code.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) A brief description of internal and external meetings is described but the agenda and subsequent results of those meetings are not clear. It is not clear in this section if the 70 percentage teacher participation was met.</p> <p>(b) There is good representation of letters of support for the proposal process transparency. A richer description of how these stakeholders were involved could have improved this section.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is no clear plan for analysis of current or future implementation of personalized learning. Description about technology is vague and ambiguous. Insufficient evidence of gaps is presented and the needs that will be addressed in this plan are missing. A point was awarded for the effort to use technology for instructional purposes.</p>		

### C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	5
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: There is a plan for improvement and college readiness but there is nothing written as it pertains to career readiness. (a) Describing the career and technical program in Bradford Schools that was alluded to earlier in the application could have strengthened this section. It seems like that program is nicely set up for career readiness in vocational and technical fields. Very little was included about parent and community involvement. Much of the discussion in this section was literacy in the early grades; in particular pre-k. (b) All student and parents/guardians will develop PLPs and have access to individual progress but there is not a description of how parents will know how to do this. (c) The same holds true for the statement about multiple measures and diverse curricular opportunities. There is not a clear description of how these tasks will be accomplished.		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	14
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Inclusion of a data support system (IU3) is an important step to inform practice. A description is included but more evidence is needed to support college and career readiness in areas more than literacy. It appears literacy is the focus, which although admirable, is not comprehensive enough to warrant a high score on this section. Performing over 800 walk through observations per year should ensure or at least inform success or failure of PLCs. There is no evidence of a high quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and high quality teachers. Missing as well is a clear articulation of how school leaders and/or leadership teams have training, policies, tools, data and resources that will enable them to structure an effective learning environment to meet individual student needs.		

### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: There is a lot written in this section but much of what is here does not pertain to the criteria. It is noted that merit pay was given to teachers not as pay per se but rather as budget for classroom materials. (a) There is not a clear description of how central offices provide support to ALL participating schools. There is a description of support but that description is very general. (b) There is inadequate description of flexibility as it pertains to the definition in this call. (c) Mastery learning is the goal of all students in BASD. However, there is not a description of how students are given the opportunity to progress to mastery. (d) Only benchmark exams are used to indicate mastery in grades 3, 8, and 11.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: Many programs are described in this section (i.e., Title I, review team interventions, summer school, software tutorials, etc.) but little is provided that directly answer the call for sections of D(2). (a) It appears parents were left out of this description. They are an important component to this section and that piece is missing more detail. A description of technologies (i.e., eSchoolbook) is used along with various webpages. How these tools will be accessed and used by all, regardless of income is not clear. (b) Inadequate description of technical support provided. There is much about assistive technology but that description is not relevant to this section. (c). There is sparse language about open data format and (d) interoperability of data.		

### E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
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(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	1
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: There is a lack of a clear description as to how the data will be monitored, measured and made available to the public. There are data tables and language in other sections of the proposal that would suggest continuous improvement has been considered but there is nothing concrete provided.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	0
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: There was nothing provided to address strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: There was no language provided to support reaching performance measures. There was not supporting rationale for selecting a measure or how the measure will provide rigorous, timely and formative information.		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: There was no plan provided as it pertains to evaluating RTTD funded activities.		

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The budget is clear and provides a thoughtful rationale. A reasonable amount of funds have been requested and the justification for the need of those funds is well articulated. Although not explicit in this section, most of the budget justification and rationale for the requested dollars are found in other areas of the proposal. Less than half of the budget is accounted for with RTTD funds while almost \$9 million will come from other sources.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: It appears RTTD funds will go to supports PLPs while several other grants and funding outlets will support blended learning environments. Although the plan promotes multiple pathways, it is not clear how personalized learning will occur in each of those pathways. The career and technical budget will be the focus for all things career pathways. This is a sound and reasonable focus of BASD. That being said, there is insufficient evidence of sustainability planning. There is nothing mentioned in the narrative about budget support for after the grant funding ends.		

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: There is no evidence addressing the priority.		

# Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is no evidence that this district has met the minimum requirements for all four core educational assurance areas. There is some language about partnerships and improving individual student achievement but there is not enough to warrant meeting this criteria. Points were deducted for not describing how data will target resources toward improving results and the rationale for the projection numbers in the presented tables.</p>		

Total	210	91
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# Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p><i>Budget provided but no justification.</i></p>		



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0355PA-2 for Bradford Area School District

# A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p><i>The applicant described a plan that did not clearly explain a comprehensive reform vision that would address the four core areas. The plan does include strategies and six projects that would target some of the areas that fully encompass college and career readiness standards.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many of the projects described by the applicant are strongly career focused for students and parents but did not focus on the standards. The STEM-A project would serve students in grades 3-12 with a center that may be access during and after school that focus on hands-on activities and experiences in science, technology, engineering, math, and art. This would not be available to prekindergarten to grade 2 students to build skills in these areas.</li> <li>The applicant described Project 1: Personal Learning Plans that would provide personalized learning for students and engage parents. Each student prekindergarten to grade 12 would create a learning plan.</li> <li>The plan include parents initiating the discussion with the teacher regarding career readiness and with the input of the student and teacher build the learning plan which does not appear appropriate since the role of the applicant is to provide a quality education for all children. The applicant did not discuss training that would be provided to parents to complete this task. It is unclear the skill level prekindergarten to grade 5 students to effectively complete this task as</li> </ul>		

well. The applicant described a strong emphasis and support of career and technical education courses that prepare students for careers.

- The applicant discussed its current use of technology in the classroom in Project 3 with the use of Cyber program which is used as an on-line delivery of instruction for students at-risk of dropping out of school and used outside of the school day. The project would expand the use to during classroom instruction time and add more courses. The applicant indicated that teachers were not comfortable using this an other technology but did not discuss the added support that would be needed or training for the teachers
- Project 4, Career Pathways, would add career occupation planning, well drilling & production center, and advanced manufacturer and design center that could be utilized by students and parents to build skills for the students and increase awareness for the parents of the types of employment, postsecondary training required, and available apprenticeships.
- The applicant did not discuss core curriculum or college and career standards that would be supported and evident with the various projects.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)

10

8

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant educational reform would be supported as it is implemented in all four schools located in the district that serve approximately 2,523 student in grades prekindergarten to 12. The applicant did not indicate the selection process or its rationale to serve all sites.

- The overall low-income percentage exceeded the required 40% for participation in this competition and all students will be served through the combined six programs within the project.
- The applicant provided in the appendix the demographics table that 213 educators would participate in the project and that not all students were being served by a highly effective teacher.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)

10

7

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant plans to serve all schools with projects through the life of the grant therefore scaling within the district will not occur. The applicant indicated that research but did not support with a citation, regarding effective personalized learning provide five areas that would be targeted but the projects described clearly supports three points.

- The applicant clearly showed that project 1 will support parents and students involvement in education through the collaboration in the development of personal learning plans.
- The applicant clearly support project 4 that will offer and support individual career interests with the addition of career pathways.
- The applicant clearly support project 6 that will focus on the mental health of students with support from psychologists and interns to serve the emotional and behavioral issues of students.
- The applicant did not support the recognition of learning styles and utilization of multiple assessment in any of the projects proposed and did not support strategies for building and support effective educators which are also key to academic student achievement.
- The applicant's project to create blended learning environments infuses alot of technology which as stated has not been fully utilized in the classroom by teachers but did not show how that would change either through training for staff or modeling. The redesigning of instructional delivery and changing how classrooms are set-up are strong changes but not support with additional information to ensure it occurs.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

3

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not include information on all subgroups served therefore it is difficult to determine if the projections are adequate, and clear. The applicant provided methodology and calculations relating to federal designation of meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) which was met therefore it is unclear why only data for two subgroups appear for improvement.

- The applicant indicated that there was an educational gap for students receiving special education services and those who are from low-income families as determined by the free-reduce lunch percentages but did not provide supporting

comparison documentation. The applicant did not show data for all subgroups with assessment data, graduation rates, or college enrollment to provide a clear picture of student need.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant discussed more than a four year success rate of improving learning for students with supporting data and awards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district provided comparison of its student performance that exceeded the state in all subject areas on state assessments supported by 2012 data. The applicant listed awards and recognition for excellent and consistent student achievement such as being honored by the College Board for increasing access to advanced placement coursework and increasing the percentage of students scoring 3 or higher on AP exams. The applicant indicated that recognition in 2011 with the Schools of Excellence in Technology Award. The applicant indicated that graduation rates and attendances rate also exceeded the state standard and allowed it to met AYP consistently for seven years.</li> <li>• The applicant indicated that student data is available to educators for use in planning instruction and interventions while parent may only view certain results via the district parent portal on the website. This overall performance data are made available via school board meetings to the public.</li> <li>• The applicant did not provide adequate data to support the extent of achievement gaps or how services/instruction has had a positive affect.</li> <li>• The applicant did not have any schools rated persistently low-performing</li> </ul>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not clearly show the transparency of district expenditures including salaries of personnel but stated that the information is available and may be requested by anyone submitting a "Right to Know" request for information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant indicated that an independent audit occurs annually but did not clearly indicated that individual salaries by teacher or instructional staff as well as non-personnel expenditures are included in the report that is released to the public.</li> <li>• The applicant indicated that the school leadership team shares the annual budget and any applications for funding in school board meetings that are open to the public.</li> </ul>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicated and supported with the citation that the state allows for delivery of alternative learning opportunitie and the current career and technical education programs which would be expanded in the proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The career and technical education clusters allow students to choose an area of interest then support with academic and job skills courses/certifications preparing them to transition from high to work more easily.</li> <li>• Many of the projects in the applicant's plan focus on expanding career and technical education in the direction of employment with little to no focus on college readiness.</li> </ul>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant clearly provided information regarding the participation of school personnel in the development of the proposal but was vague as to the participation of other stakeholders.

- The applicant indicated minimal involvement from several school personnel from several critical departments such as curriculum, assessment, administrators, career and technical education staff, teachers, and federal program directors input and review of the proposal.
- The applicant indicated that community members reviewed the proposal but did not provide a breakdown of this group to ensure parents and students were included.
- The applicant did not discuss is collective bargaining status or provide support letters from teachers or the 70% teacher participation required if no collective bargaining existed.
- The applicant provided in the appendix support letters for the proposal from the chamber of commerce, local health care entity, university, and other local businesses.
- The applicant did not indicate a strong support from teachers, parents, or students by support letters.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a results of a gap analysis performed of the educational environment currently provided to all students that had shown success in the past but recognize the need to improve and utilize 21<sup>st</sup> century technology and strategies more effectively. All results of the analysis were not discussed in the proposal to be addressed.

- The applicant indicated that current classroom instruction needs to be more student-centered and plans to utilize computers and ipods with students to access adapted instruction but it is unclear the training teachers would receive to create downloadable lessons or remediation.
- The applicant described lack of abilities and motivation of some teachers to utilize technology in the classroom but did not indicate that the proposal would address it or how the framework needed for teachers to embrace the use of technology
- The applicant described how classroom teachers do have the support needed to incorporate technology in instruction therefore the proposal includes of math and/or technology coaches to help build capacity of teachers and facilitate learning in the classroom with demonstrated lessons.
- The applicant plans to share with teachers pedagogical modes and data that support how by changing the instructional delivery students improve with the hope of generating interest in using technology in the classroom..

## C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant described other plans in place in the district that must connect to the proposal to ensure and support personalized learning opportunities for all students and some are appropriate to ensure a successful plan.

- The applicant indicated it was currently in its third year of transitioning to adopted Common Core Standards and ensures that all students would receive a standards based curriculum.
- The applicant's current transition plan only serves students from prekindergarten to kindergarten and plans to support a transition plan for children birth to age three which the applicant did not provide an adequate connection to this proposal.
- The applicant indicated that parents, educators, and community members are developing a district-wide Literacy Plan which is a high priority and staff had already received over 300 hours of training but did not connect this work to the proposal especially since the assessment data presents in the appendix did not indicate that students were struggling in reading.
- The applicant plans to ensure that all student grades prekindergarten -12 are involved in the education plan through the completion of personal learning plans to be created by the parent, teacher, and student. The applicant's design of this plan would include the education path chosen by a student to include student interests but did not discuss the use of any type of interest inventory or other system to aid students. The personal learning plans concept by the applicant is designed to give students ownership, help them create goals, and track their success in their own education. The design is good yet support for elementary students and parents to utilize this tool to it full potential was not discussed



and needed.

- The applicant described a current multiple offering of courses such as on-line for grades 5-12; dual enrollment for high school students through a partnership with the University at Pittsburg, and 11 Career and Technical education programs of student. Currently, the applicant's high needs students such as the 107 prekindergartens are offered a full-day program and students receiving special education services are provided a transition to work program.
- The applicant indicated that the curriculum and assessment department would ensure that student data is available, reviewed, and analyzed by group of teachers across grade levels and subject areas, principals, instructional coaches, and central office staff five times per year.
- The applicant plans to ensure that math and/or technology coaches provide the technical assistance needed for parents, students, and teachers to utilize tools to access data. The applicant did not indicate the training this group would need to effectively interpret the data to determine effectiveness or modifications in course selection or instructional delivery.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)

20

10

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant described three critical areas of focus that promote effective personalized learning environments which are a universal feedback system that is not in place, effective teaching to be strengthened in the project, and building background knowledge of students.

- The applicant described several data systems used to collect student and staff data and recognize the need for consistency therefore the applicant described the purchase of software that would connect student data to curriculum standards and assessment to classroom instruction. The new system still required training for staff which will occur in 2013.
- The applicant discussed curriculum standards but no project specifically addresses college-readiness standards, how they would be measured, or training for teachers to ensure the standards are met.
- The applicant plans to utilize literacy coaches to provide professional development to teachers throughout the year in various means including the modeling of teaching strategies to support teachers in the classroom and increase capacity.
- The applicant indicated that principals would meet with teachers at the beginning of the school year to set goals for student achievement and meeting their needs since student achievement is part of each teacher's performance evaluation. It is unclear what data would be used as the baseline is the students would be coming from the previous grade level.
- The applicant indicated that classroom teachers were part of the professional learning communities that collaborated five times per year in reviewing, analyzing, and showcasing student data. The data is compiled from benchmark assessments that are administered every six weeks and results are discussed during student-teacher conference and sent home to parents. The parents are not included in this conference/discussion.
- The applicant did not discuss how teachers would adapt instruction or content as needed for special needs students.

## D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	4

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicated that the business office staff and district leaders support its commitment to schools receiving resources needed to meet educational needs of all students served.

- The applicant did not address flexibility and autonomy to provide to schools regarding budgets, class schedulings, or personnel decisions. The professional learning community would have input on the types of professional development needed for teachers.
- The applicant did not discuss how the proposal would ensure students would be given the opportunity to earn credit based upon mastery of content at various paces. The applicant does offer various content delivery models but did not indicate that students could earn credit using those methods.
- The applicant indicated that locally created benchmark assessments would be administered every six weeks to students to be used to determine if they would be successful on the once yearly administered state assessment.
- The applicant discussed in another section that students receiving special education services may access course

content via the computer or ipods based upon their skill level. It is unclear if full lessons would be accessible.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)

10

5

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant plans to develop the technology supported by the district's website that will house student data and allow easy access by parents and students to assessment, grades, attendance, and behavioral data.

- The applicant will ensure the district's website allows public access to district-wide data including overall budgets.
- The applicant plans to add additional technology staff to provide technical assistance to staff in the use of technology that includes ipods and videos of classroom instruction, website access via individual accounts, etc.
- The applicant discussed various data systems available and training to be provided to staff. The applicant will be implementing a new data system, OnHands Schools Management software, for which training will occur May 2013.
- It is unclear the support to parents who do not have the technology or need technical assistance in access student data would occur or be available.

## E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant indicated that the plan and activities of the proposal will be included in the current process used to monitor all district programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant plan to include and review student progress data during professional learning communities team meetings where review and analysis will occur for immediate feedback to the instructional teams.</li> <li>• The applicant described adequate means to review student data/results from project 1 but it is unclear how feedback from the other projects that are not connected to student data would convert to changes or modifications in how the projects are implemented if needed.</li> <li>• The applicant provided a budget with many one time cost such as in the area of technology; ipad carts, tables, chairs, and extra time for teachers to write curriculum to create the alternative evening program that would result in either the activity being absorbed by the applicant when the grant ends or discontinued due to lack of need.</li> </ul>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	0
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant did not address this criteria.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant did not include performance measures for all grade levels and those provided included minimal projections for improvement. The applicant also provided performance measures that were not discussed in the narrative as part of the personalized learning initiative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant's projects focus on career and technical education pathways that lead to careers not college therefore completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA) was not discussed but listed as a performance measure.</li> <li>• The applicant did not include the rationale for the measures selected for example grades 9-12 to ensure they are</li> </ul>		

career ready.

- The academic achievement results in the applicant's proposal are connected to state assessment results for students receiving special education services and students who are economically disadvantage with appropriate performance measures with minimal improvement projected.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant plans to use the annual performance evaluations of teachers, administrators, and the superintendent to determine the effectiveness of the project which may be reasonable for the overall performance of students but evaluation of each component of the projects would be more reasonable to determine modifications if needed.

- The applicant included in the budget funds to provide teachers time to attend professional development within the district such as peer monitoring teaching strategies and outside the district to attend workshops/conferences on instructional strategies.
- The applicant plans to work with the local medical facility to promote literacy by providing books to parents of newborns to build a home library and encourage parents to read to their child more frequency but did not adequately connect this activity to any of the projects.

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant included other funding and resources available to collaboratively support the proposed project.

- The applicant plan to utilize Title I, Title II, Carl Perkins, and district funds to support the projects proposed and to sustain some activities that remain as needed after the grant ends.
- The applicant did provide adequate support for project 6 that will provide mental, emotional, and social services to students being served with data such as high discipline referrals per grade level or expulsions due to behavior. The funds requested are appropriate and approximately one million dollars.
- The applicant does not plan to maintain the consultants after the first year who are assisting with the development of a personal learning plan for all students but plan to add this function to classroom teachers to continue with little to no preparation.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)

10

7

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's project primary focus in on career readiness and described a substantial financial commitment to the projects proposed with some cost from the grant being a one-time investment such as technology purchases that would be maintained and supported by current technology staff.

- The budgets provided would cover the projects for the four year period with district and other funds picking up activities after the grant ends to ensure components continue such as the additional career and technical pathways and the alternative education component that would be covered with district and other federal funds.
- The additional guidance counselors would be a one-time investment would be hired to ensure that every student prekindergarten - twelve would complete a personal learning plan by May 2013. The applicant did not discuss the additional time and collaboration among grade level teams or vertical teams that would be needed for teachers to revise and update all the plans as students move from one grade to next or one school to the next without this support.
- The applicant plans to contract with an outside entity to provide personalized pathways for students receiving special education services but did not discuss how this would continue after the grant ends.

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not address this criteria.		

## Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The applicant described a reform vision that would address the four core areas. The plan includes six projects that would target all students being served in four schools encompassing all grade levels. The plan has a strong focus on personalized learning preparing student for careers supported by the career and technical education clusters. The plans combine academics with student interests as they focus on one or more of the career clusters.		

Total	210	113
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0355PA-3 for Bradford Area School District

## A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:  BASD meets the four Core Assurance Areas in the following manner:  1. Standards and assessments will be aligned with the Common Core  2. Through the IU3 and other technology-based solutions teachers will have access to actionable information in real-time upon which to make instructional decisions. Because the data is from a variety of sources it will be aligned with standards and match student needs.  3. Implementation of teacher and principal evaluation systems that are focused on professional growth and include student growth measures.		

4. Utilization of gap/need analysis to target specific students and interventions through the use of technology, collaboration, and teacher professional development

BASD has proposed a comprehensive plan for reforming teaching and learning that includes a personalized learning plans, blended learning environments, a cyber program for non-traditional learners, and career pathways in addition to a behavioral/mental health program. The comprehensive approach to reform that includes each of the core assurance areas and a personalized learning center based on student need rate this section in the high range.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

BASD has developed a plan that will scale to include the entire district (four schools) over a four-year period and will reach a total of 2,523 students, 51% of whom are from low-income families.

1. total number of participating students – 2,523
2. participating students from low income families – 1,286
3. participating students who are high need – 842
4. participating educators – 213

The district does provide a quality rationale for why they will scale the project over a four-year period, the proposal does not indicate the order in which schools will enroll in the project. Additionally, the proposal does not indicate a rationale for how the order of participation was determined. The district does intend to show growth in each setting beginning in year one however, so there would be a relationship between when schools are included in the program and when the targeted growth would occur that does not seem to have been taken into consideration, subsequently this section rates in the high mid range.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The BASD plan includes 5 projects designed to impact academic and career achievement:

- a. Support student and parent participation in the planning and ownership of their education – achieved through the use of Personalized Learning Plans
- b. Recognize a variety of learning styles and multiple approaches to learning – supports varied learning styles through the use of blended learning environments in the classroom increasing student engagement.
- c. Utilization of multiple assessments and for student achievement
- d. Offering a variety of educational programs that support individual career interests – along with c meets the diverse needs of students
- e. Address the emotional and behavioral needs of all students

The district proposal provides sufficient evidence that their comprehensive approach to personalize learning, which provides immediate feedback to students and educators on college and career standards is high quality. The proposal, however, lacks a theory of change or chain of logic that can support the idea that what has been proposed can lead to meaningful reform. As a result this section scores in the mid range.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Over the past 3 years the district has been able to outperform the state in each of their performance metrics and meet AYP. The proposed plan, based on an appropriate methodology, likely will be able to meet the ambitious and achievable annual goals the district has set.

- a) The performance on summative assessments are ambitious and likely achievable for all subgroups. In most instances students will be expected to make gains on the order of 10-20%.

- b) The closing of gaps again is ambitious and is likely be achievable. The district has proposed cutting the gaps in half over the next 5 years. If this is achieved this will result in gaps only slightly over single digit deficiencies.
- c) The proposal does establish ambitious and achievable graduation rates. The proposal calls for an overall graduation rate of 96%, a gain from 93% over the five-year period. Economically disadvantaged students will need to gain 7% over the same time period, this district did not identify special education graduation rates.
- d) The district has proposed an approximately 20% or more gains in college enrollment that is ambitious but may not be achievable based on the proposed program.

The goals proposed by the district, in each case, are ambitious and mostly achievable. It is feasible that the proposed program could result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity resulting in a high range score.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BASD has, in the past 4 years, demonstrated a record of success in advancing student learning and achievement. The district has consistently outperformed the state on assessments, made AYP, was honored by the College Board, and consistently increased its standing on an annual ranking of school districts. However, the proposal fails to identify the following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While there is evidence that they have improved student learning outcomes, evidence was not provided to support the closing of achievement gaps and increasing equity.</li> <li>The proposal does not identify specific lowest-achieving or low-performing schools.</li> <li>Student performance data are noted in the PSSA and PVAAS as providing a complete picture of student learning, but the proposal does not indicate to what degree these results are available to students, parents, or educators.</li> </ol> <p>Strengths of this section include evidence of effective reforms and public distinctions. Weaknesses include a lack of reliable 3-4 year student achievement data and lack of specificity with regard to the districts lowest-achieving or low-performing schools. As a result this section rates in the high mid range.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BASD provides actual personnel salaries at the school level, including teachers only, and non-personnel expenditures at the school level upon request, requiring an additional step for interested individuals and a 5 day response time.</p> <p>The district also maintains a level of transparency through yearly budget proposals at the monthly school board meetings and through an independent audit.</p> <p>There is a moderate level of transparency, due to the lack of easy access to budgetary data resulting in a low mid-range score.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The components of personalized learning environment within the plan proposed by the BASD fit within the existing legislation in Pennsylvania. Alignment to the Common Core, shifting to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century teaching model, and the utilization of data in the advancement of personalized learning systems. Additionally, it appears that all of the additional components within the</p>		

proposal fall under standard school operations making it unlikely that there would be insufficient autonomy under state legal, statutory or regulatory requirements to impede the progress of the proposal resulting in a high score.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is insufficient evidence that BASD took the necessary steps to invite meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of and support for the proposal including teachers, administrators, parents and community members. District administrators met to discuss the feasibility and development and only after a decision was made and the grant developed were stakeholders invited. The proposal states that the Superintendent and District Principal for Curriculum presented the grant to school administrators and later teachers, parents, external stakeholders. Letters of support were included, but there is no indication that groups outside of the district administration had meaningful participation in the development of the proposal. The lack of meaningful stakeholder input into the development of the proposal is a clear weakness.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

BASD conducted an acceptable gap analysis that included technology, teacher ability and motivation and ongoing support. In each instance, the district discussed the manner in which the proposed method of reform would assist in addressing the need/gap. While BASD did conduct a gap analysis, most of the items utilized are only partially related to the implementation of the personalized learning environments leading to a mid level score.

## C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BASD has a plan to incorporate personal learning plans, utilize technology, increase professional development, utilize literacy coaches, improve data systems, review teacher evaluation, and develop common assessments. This approach could be considered a high quality plan for improving teaching and learning that engages and empowers learners through a personalized approach.</p> <p>a. The district will utilize a standards-based curriculum based on the Common Core and district-wide literacy plan in the support of a personalized approach to learning.</p> <p>b. Through the use of technology, the district will increase student engagement through high-quality instructional approaches and content.</p> <p>c. The proposal does not include specifics as to how students will be trained or supported throughout the process of implementation.</p> <p>While BASD has proposed a high-quality plan for the development of personalized learning systems, there is a lack of evidence to describe how parents will be engaged in the student learning process and how frequently updated student data will be used to drive decision making. Additionally, the proposal fails to describe exactly how students will be trained and supported in each of the new interventions. This results in a mid-range score.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In order to support teachers as they develop personalized learning environments for each of their students the district has proposed the use of instructional coaches, comprehensive data analysis software, the use of student growth in evaluation and a common language in instruction driven by the classroom evaluations.</p>		

- a. The proposal submitted by BASD calls for the use of a technology solution (IU3). This solution will be used to provide teachers with the ability to study trends in student growth, identify specific areas of need and assist in the development of improvement plans for students.
- b. Through the IU3 and other technology-based solutions teachers will have access to actionable information in real-time upon which to make instructional decisions. Because the data is from a variety of sources it will be aligned with standards and match student needs.
- c. The district plans to complete training for all staff by March 2013.
- d. BASD has identified that the process for teacher evaluation and administrator evaluation that includes student growth as a component. Though it is unclear to what degree growth is factored into the evaluation. Additionally, it is unclear how effective and highly effective statuses are determined.

The district has developed a high quality plan for the development of personalized learning environments and a plan to ensure teachers are well prepared to develop and implement the approaches. However, the plan lacks specific information about how the teacher and principal evaluation systems will be utilized to support the learning environments, designations of effective and highly effective, access to teachers and administrators who are at least effective, and how they will address hard to staff schools and subject. The deficiencies in this section result in a low high range score.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: BASD has provided sufficient evidence that a plan has been developed that provides every student, educator, and level of the education system with sufficient autonomy, support, and resources when and where needed. There is sufficient evidence to support students being given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards in multiple ways and evidence that resources and practices are adaptable and fully accessible to all students including those with disabilities or English learners. This results in a high level rating.		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. BASD has supplied sufficient evidence to suggest that they are organized in a manner that provides the required support and services to schools.</li> <li>b. There is insufficient evidence that school leadership teams are provided with flexibility and autonomy. It is undetermined how schedules, budgets, and hiring decisions are conducted.</li> <li>c. The district provides students with the opportunity to earn credit through multiple means and in multiple ways. learning experiences. Students have the opportunity for dual credit or credit recovery options for remediation or acceleration.</li> <li>d. The district provides opportunities to demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways and multiple times in traditional and non-traditional ways.</li> <li>e. BASD provides learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and accessible to all students including English learners and students with disabilities the learning resources and instructional strategies are.</li> </ol>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	2
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: BASD has provided sufficient evidence that the LEA and school infrastructure supports personalized learning, but provides insufficient evidence that stakeholders are provided with adequate technical support, can export data, and that data systems are interoperable resulting in a low score.		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The district utilizes technology so students and parents can access individual student data and educational resources.</li> <li>b. There is limited evidence that the district provides technical support for all stakeholders including students and parents.</li> <li>c. The proposal does not address whether students and families have the opportunity to export data.</li> <li>d. The proposal does not address the interoperability of the data systems being utilized.</li> </ol>		



## E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	2
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: BASD proposed the use of a research-based methodology in an ongoing process to implement, reflect on and refine their intervention. There is no indication of how this process will be implemented, including the individuals involved, how progress will be measured toward specific goals, and the process for ongoing corrections and improvements. The strategy also fails to address how the district will publicly share information on the quality of the project. This results in low score.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: BASD has previously discussed how it will communicate findings to stakeholders via various formats including face-to-face meetings, district website and social media. There is some evidence to support a mid level score for strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: The BASD plan includes a set of appropriate indicators including both academic performance and social-emotional measures. The indicators listed include both quantitative measures of student progress and qualitative measures of social-emotional well-being. It is unclear if the measures are fully inclusive, for the PreK-3 measures only Blaisdell Elementary measures office referrals, the 4-8 population does not include reading as a measure only science, and 9-12 measures college-career readiness. There is little overlap upon which to look at data longitudinally and assess impact. The district fails to provide an acceptable rationale for each measure and how they can be used in a formative manner to assess growth over time. The lack of coherence, over-lapping measures, and inability to utilize the measures formatively and longitudinally results in a low range score.		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: Other than the statement related to the type of methodology employed, the proposal fails to provide any specific indication as to how they will evaluate the funded initiatives, specifically, professional development and technology. Additionally, the proposal fails to discuss how evaluations will be utilized to more productively utilize time, staff, money or other resources to improve project outcomes. This results in a low score.		

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:  The proposal includes a detailed analysis of how both internal and grant funds will be utilized to support the proposed program. The majority of grant funds are allocated to personnel, equipment and contractual costs, the project should be sustained through increased capacity and general funds, since the district is incorporating more external than grant funds. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal includes project-level budget summaries that include total funding based on grant and other sources.</li> <li>The majority of grant funds are dedicated to personnel, equipment, and contract costs related to design and</li> </ol>		

implementation of the program. The request appears to be reasonable and sufficient to support the implementation of the proposal.

c. The BASD proposal provided an acceptable rationale for the allocation of all funds. The vast majority are allocated as one-time including personnel. The proposal also identifies external and internal sources of funding to support the project. Given a total operating budget of nearly \$15 million, more than half of which are not grant funds, and the bulk of the budget being tied to infrastructure and personnel costs there is evidence of sustainability.

The section includes the necessary components and the rationale is reasonable and sufficient and there is evidence to support sustainability resulting in a high level score.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal provided an acceptable rationale for the allocation of all funds. The vast majority are allocated as one-time including personnel, equipment, and contracted services. The proposal also identifies additional sources of funding to support the project. Due to the bulk of the funding being tied upgrades and equipment and approximately 53% of the entire budget provided by the district, there is evidence of long-term sustainability after the grant period expires.

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: A competitive preference priority was not included.		

## Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:  There is strong evidence to support that the proposal submitted by the BASD has met Absolute Priority 1. a. The adoption of the common core standards and college-and-career standards, b. the development personal learning plans, blended learning environments, cyber program for non-traditional learners, career pathways, STEM labs, and a behavioral/mental health program. c. efforts to recruit, reward and retain effective teachers through the new evaluation system focused on professional growth, that includes student growth as a component. d. efforts to turn around the lowest-achieving schools through targeted personalized approaches, multiple ways to document proficiency, and multiple pathways		

Total	210	143
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